

Liverpool Catholic Ramblers' Association
Christmas Newsletter



The Bridge House
AMBLESIDE



The Moot Hall
KESWICK

NEW MEMBERS

We've had several new members over the last few months. A hearty welcome to you all. The latest two are John and Lydia McCormick.

We continue to recruit new members. Spread the word around, but do warn them that we are, like most rambling clubs, actually a fell walking club and do a lot of hill walking in many areas.

WINTER RAMBLING PROGRAMMES

If you haven't got yours yet it probably means that you haven't renewed your subs.

Annual subscriptions were due in September, £5 Single members, £6 Married couples.

Send cheques, made out to LCRA, to Will Harris, 57 Higher Road, L26 1TA, or pay cash on the coach.

WINTER COACHES

Result of the club's recent 4-week referendum on the coaches was a close shave against a 9.00 departure. So now our winter only rule is that we leave promptly at 9.30 and have a short toilet stop on the outward journeys. Hopefully this will give us more walking time before darkness descends.

Members are reminded that they should all bring a torch with them on winter rambles.

AMBLESIDE AT NEW YEAR

Arrangements are being made for everyone to go up there in a small coach at a cost of £20 each. Depart Monday 30th December for three nights, returning on Thursday 2nd January.

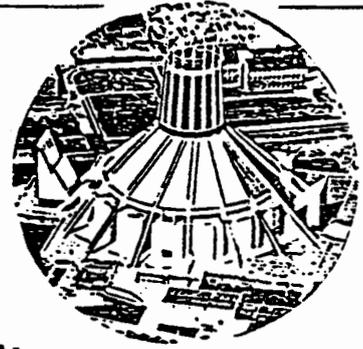
Although club bookings are now closed, there could be vacancies if you phone the hostel direct or contact Dave Dickel on 01244 533995.

BOOTS FOR SALE

Hawkshead walking boots, size 9 (Euro 43), modern nylon material. Brand new £10. Contact Helen Hotchkiss 280 4531.

CLUB BADGES FOR SALE

Club badges, made of cloth, are available at just £2 each. Many members wear them on their rucksacks or clothing. Ask on the coach.



Editor's bit

With preparations for our 75th Anniversary taking priority, there hasn't been a newsletter since August.

Over the months not many articles have been sent in, but, ironically, while this edition was being prepared to take down to the club tonight, there was a phone call to say an article would be in the post tomorrow. That article will have to appear in the next edition unfortunately, as we can't delay any longer.

Thanks to Richie and Jack for contributing to this edition. Any articles for the next newsletter should be given to me, or posted to **7 Abbotts Way, Billinge, Wigan WN5 7SB**
Dave Newns

THE NEW COMMITTEE

Whoops! Three committee members' names were wrongly spelt in your programme. Correct spellings are Joan **Duffy**, Gordon **Hodson** and Doris **Murphy**. *Marks 7 out of 11, could do better!*

I'm on a Committee

Oh give me your pity, I'm on a committee,
Which means that from morning to night
We attend and amend, and contend and defend,
Without a conclusion in sight!

We confer and concur, we defer and demur
And reiterate all of our thoughts.

We revise the agenda with frequent addenda
And consider a load of reports.

We compose and propose, we suppose and
oppose,

And the points of procedure are fun.

But though various notions are brought in as
motions -

Remarkably little gets done!

We resolve and absolve, but we never dissolve,
Since it's out of the question for us!

What a shattering pity to end our committee -
Where else could we make such a fuss?

- Spotted by Jack Henderson in a Regimental
newsletter.



Our great 75th Birthday blast



TICKETS were selling slowly less than a month ago, so we searched the highways and byways successfully for past members, and also booked a different duo for dancing to.

At last the big night came and we were allocated seats - eight per circular table. After our choice of meals we primed our glasses for a toasting session, being entertained by several amusing speeches - even Father Gaine (one of our guests) included a few jokes! The band then kicked off with the pleasant tempo of a waltz or two. The music wasn't too loud and most people enjoyed it.

There was now a request for the Limehouse Blues. Thirty to forty years ago, this tune was the signal to get up and dance the Circassian Circle at our weekly clubnights. Now our Country Dance team swung into action, as many young-at-heart dancers checked their memory banks and joined hands. *This progressive dance, which almost every member did in those bygone days, meant that newcomers swapped partners with many of the opposite sex within a few minutes, and were, hopefully, seduced into joining us on future walks.*

Programmed to suit everyone at this large Botanic Suite of Devonshire House Hotel, the dance duo (drummer and keyboard player) alternated half hourly with the disco, while old and new members danced or compared stories about old times and played 'Who's Who' with the many nostalgic photographs displayed near the bar.

Main age of the 110 enjoying this evening, was roughly between 45 to 65 years, with a few slightly

younger ones plus a number of over 65's dancing. A large cake (in the shape of '75') donated by one of our members who had cake decorating connections, was on display and later cut for us either to eat there or to take home.

We also had a presentation of our Fred Norbury Trophy (*inaugurated in 1973 in memory of our last founder member who died in 1972*). Chris Dobbin, our first lay-President, was the surprised recipient. We could say that Chris earned it this year for frantically seeking out our new dance band duo, thus ensuring a very successful 75th celebration.

Two new members, John and Lydia, also unobtrusively captured the whole event on video.

The evening took a lot of organising, by Mike, Will, Chris, Ray, Dave and others, including Hilda (from the Reunion group). We expected to make a slight loss (after some long-term members elected not to come) but the good news is, that thanks to our raffle proceeds, we broke even on costs.



Forthcoming Social Events



Thursdays at the Ship and Mitre, Dale Street

DECEMBER

- 5th **Cheese and Wine Night** and Ken's Quiz
- 12th **Play Your Cards Right**
Win cash just by shouting 'Higher' (or 'Lower') with Mike Riley
- 19th Booking Night only
- 26th No Club Night

JANUARY

- 9th **Cheese and Wine Night** (note second Thurs)
- 16th **Bring and Buy Night** - Bring all those unwanted presents and other items that you think could generate cash for the club. Ray Mc is auctioneer
- 23rd **Who Wants to be a Millionaire-ish Quiz.**
Win up to a fiver in cash, with Will Harris
- 30th **Charades Quiz**



You'll find a Welcome in the Hillside!



A FARMER who drove lethal hedge-cutting machinery at a group of 20 ramblers after telling them to get off his land was ordered to attend an anger management course by Flintshire magistrates in Mold recently. Farmer Jones, aged 55, of Ty'n y Coed, was fortunate not to be going into custody, said the chairman. (*No, it wasn't our group!*)

Lac Blanc Chamonix

An introduction to the French Alps

I BELIEVE some of our members have already walked the French Alps. This is a description of a walk I read in *Le Figaro* (a French newspaper) recently which is highly recommended as a good introduction to the area and is suitable for all levels of fitness.

The Lac Blanc (White Lake) ramble can be found in the massif des Aiguilles Rouges (Red Needles) which faces the famous Mont Blanc from the south, so fantastic views are assured.

To get there you travel to Praz de Chamonix, then take a cable car called the *Telepherique de la Flagere* (at 1,800 metres) then the cable car called *De l'Index*. Prices seem to be quite reasonable for the return trips needed.

Suitably attired with good rambling boots, rucksack and sunglasses, you leave the cable car station at 2,3385 metres breathing in the clear mountain air.

A wooden signpost points you in the direction of *Lac Blanc* - 1 hour 15 mins. You then pick up the rocky path which criss-crosses the two sides of the valley but which remains fairly level. Keeping a careful watch on where you put your feet (as the path is rocky, being on the limits of high mountain terrain at 2,000 metres) you will see cairns and red painted markings on stones to point your way at regular intervals, so there is not much danger of getting lost! Sheep often ascend the green heights to look over the passing ramblers and in doing so disturb these stone piles, perhaps on purpose?

Facing Mont Blanc (the eternally snow-covered mountain) you will also see peak after peak of the Aiguilles de Chamonix and the large sea of ice, the legendary glacier of the area.

After only an hour's walking you arrive at the lake with the

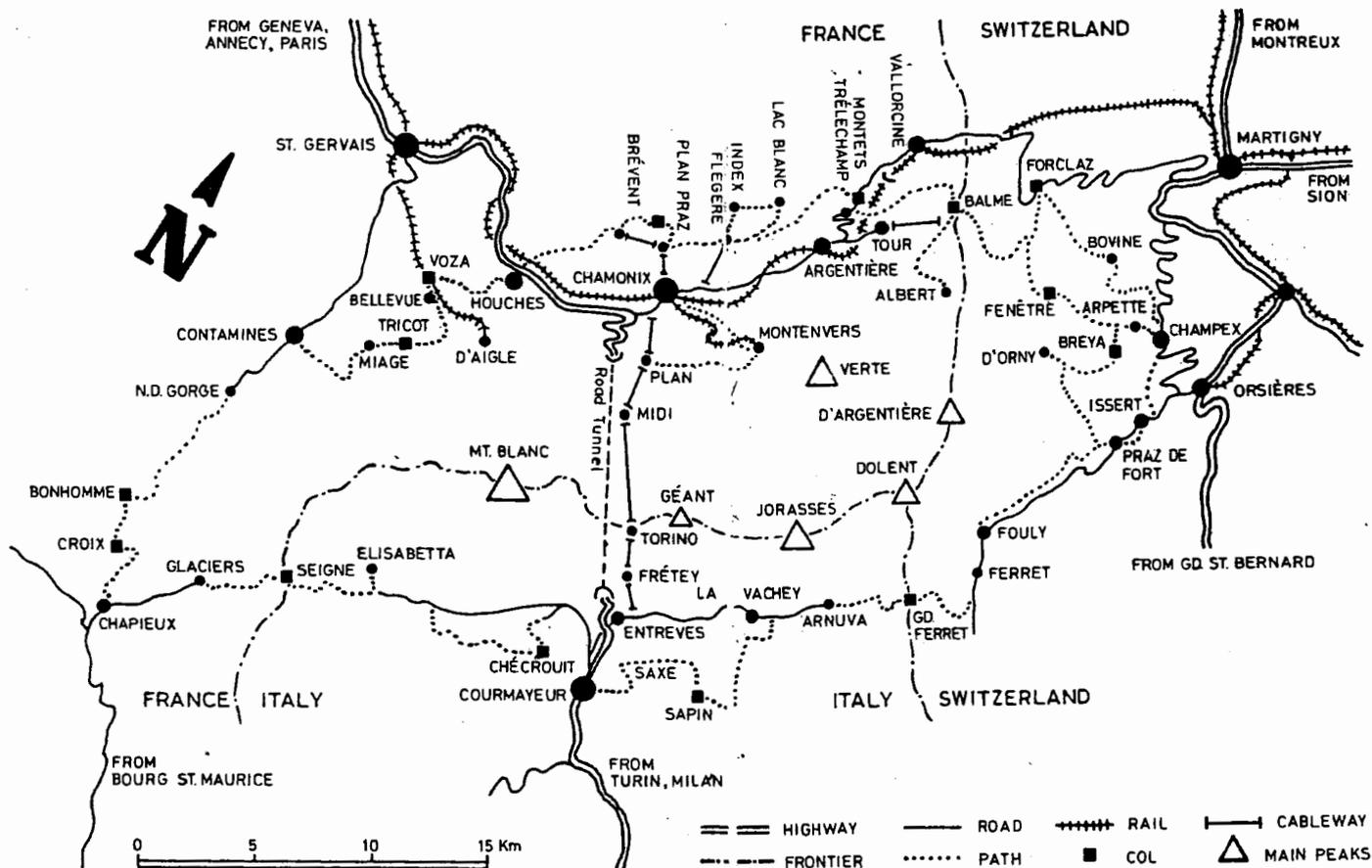
famous pyramid peak of Mont Blanc as a backdrop. Here ramblers dip their fingers in its cold waters, make a few tours around it, find a suitable outcrop to pose for that photo souvenir and eventually bathe in the lake!

Finally they go to the nearby refuge chalet, a superb belvedere at 2,352 metres, to enjoy blueberry cakes and the panorama. A dessert-type meal here costs around 14 euros (approx £8.70) smile included. You can also sleep here for £27 per night. Guides who give commentaries while you walk can also be hired for about £14.40 a day.

In nearby villages you can expect to pay around 200 euros (£124 a day) for a 4-star hotel or 110 to 160 euros (up to £96) for a 3-star hotel with a double room, breakfast included.

Further information can be obtained from the Tourism Office - tel. 04.50.53.00.24 or www.chamonix.com - but I do not know if they have English speaking staff to advise!

Richie Cannon





NOSTALGIC MILESTONES



Snapshots from the Association's full 75-year history

Largest attendance was in the late 1930's when 98 went on a walk to Caerwrie, near Wrexham - just one leader - no 'A' or 'B' walks then! There were often 50 to 60 on a walk. World War II stopped us rambling for over five years, but we survived where many other Catholic rambling clubs didn't.

- 1927 After a few preliminary meetings, our first AGM was held in July. Annual subscription one shilling.
- 1928 Membership soared to over 110. Ramble reminders were sent to members by individual postcards.
- 1929 First printed rambling programmes were supplied to members.
- 1933 Joint walks with other Catholic rambling clubs commenced.
- 1935 Club's first Football Team was formed at Queen's Drive, Stoneycroft.
- 1936 YHA holiday in Ireland. Club's Tennis Section formed, but using public courts at Newsham Park.
- 1938 Tennis Section moved to Cherry Lane, Walton, but short-lived with the intervention of the war.
- 1940 Last pre-war social held in an air-raid shelter as clubroom was badly damaged by bombs.
- 1940 No rambles during the war but a small nucleus of members held quarterly meetings and maintained to 45 contact by corresponding to many members called up to serve overseas.
- 1945 First post-war social held in October at St Oswald's Hall, Old Swan, and rambling resumed.
- 1946 Tennis Section revived, first at The White Sisters Convent in Sefton Park, then at Garden View, West Derby. Newsletter resumed publication in June. Membership was 46.
- 1948 Football Section resumed. Twenty-first anniversary dinner and dance held at Reece's Cafe with Archbishop Halsall presiding.
- 1952 Clubroom moved to Cathedral Buildings, Brownlow Hill. Netball Section formed (short-lived?).
- 1955 Thriving Tennis Club (50 members) moved to Lance Grove, Wavertree where many successful years were spent with organised dances and American Tournaments for everyone in the LCRA.
- 1957 First of 38 years of Yuletide Walks at Rivington Barn. Many previous Yuletide venues were varied.
- 1959 First of a decade of trips to Church Stretton for football and a social at the De Montfort College.
- 1966 Groups within the club now booking skiing holidays to Austria and Italy almost annually until 1990.
- 1967 Changed clubrooms from Cathedral Buildings to Design Centre, Hope Street, triggering a change of clubrooms every three years on average. Metropolitan Cathedral opened on May 14th.
- 1968 Seven of our young lady members tragically killed in an air crash on way to Austrian walking holiday.
- 1970 Family Section formed with approval of General Committee. Orienteering introduced in the club.
- 1972 Fred Norbury, last of our active founder members, and a popular vice-president, died suddenly.
- 1973 Sad demise of the Tennis Section as land was sold for building on. Some joined another tennis club.
- 1976 Cyril Kelly, another stalwart, and vice-president, died. Joining in 1934, he was chairman for 11 years.
- 1982 Club thought we'd found ideal clubrooms at Atlantic House, Hardman Street, holding dances on two open-plan floors. Memorable Christmas/New Year buffets there. Sadly, we had to move out in 1985.
- 1990 New influx of 'mature' members and a sudden demand for regular 'C' walks.
- 1992 Family Section renamed to be called the Seniors' Section and a new young Family Section formed.
- 1995 End of an era of 38 years of Yuletide Walks, Hot-pot and Dancing at Rivington Barn.
- 1997 Gerard Penlington, a vice-president, died, after over 50 years service in many roles, including a record of 36 years as treasurer of the club.
- 1998 Chris Dobbin was elected as first lay-President (some of our Archbishops presiding in the past). Some 30 members went to Zakopane in southern Poland, walking in the Tatra Mountains.
- 2000 Millennium weekend celebrated at Ambleside Youth Hostel by about 32 members. A spring holiday in hostels at Loch Lomond, Glen Nevis, Torridon and Edinburgh, attracted 30 members.
- 2001 Foot and Mouth outbreak stopped our normal walks in mid-February for several months but we utilised by planning local walks on permitted paths and outings to Chester and York.

Seniors' Section ramble - 13th October

ELEVEN ramblers were out on a 'limb' in Cheshire on a recent Sunday. We met at The Cross and the walk commenced with a circuit of Lymm Dam which we reached via the narrowing Dingle with picturesque cottages beyond the millpond.

We walked along the waterside path eventually crossing a brook on the broadwalk then turned left along a path leading to two footbridges across the lake. To get back to the village centre we took a winding path along Rectory Lane.

After crossing the Canal Bridge we took a lane to the left to reach the old railway where we joined the Trans-Pennine Trail. We followed the Trail until we came upon a picnic area and stopped for our lunch.

Our walk then took us under the Thelwall Viaduct and into the village of Thelwall. At this point we did a little detour to have a look at the Manchester Ship Canal and the small ferry boats used to take people across the water.

Obviously the operators work a five-day week because there was no activity so we retraced our steps to the road and continued as far as the Church and on to the Bridgewater Canal. Our tea-break was taken in a little alcove on the towpath which we found after manoeuvring past sundry anglers and their empty keepnets.

Our walk ended when we came upon several flower-bedecked and obviously very old cottages just prior to the car park.

We were pleased to welcome two new members and look forward to seeing them regularly on our rambles, at house meetings, etc. We were also delighted that we had successfully managed the ramble without one of the co-leaders, although it has to be said that we missed her.

Before returning home we all enjoyed a meal at Lymm and were very pleased that the rain held off until we were ready to leave.

Our thanks to Maureen for a very enjoyable day out.

ANON

A 51-year-old rambling programme and Benediction Rambles

The Catholic side of the club was more in evidence until 1966 when, in addition to our Annual Mass and Retreats, which we still have, we also had Benediction Rambles.

We included Benediction about once a month at the end of the ramble.

To jog our memories, Benediction is a short service with set prayers called the Divine Praises, then a public Blessing by the priest and set hymns.

We also used to say the Rosary at the clubrooms once a month until we moved into licensed premises in the 1970's.

1950/1	To	Time	From	App. Cost	Leader
Oct. 29	Hatchmere	10 am	Pier Head	2/6	C. Collins
Nov. 5	Badgers Rake (Benediction)	10-15 am	Pier Head	1/2	M. Walsh
„ 12	Carr Mill Dam	2 pm	Russell St.	2/-	M. Roberts
„ 19	Trevalyn Meadows	10-15 am	Pier Head	2/6	B. Tracey
„ 26	Abergele	9-15 am	Lime St. Stn.	6/3	B. Edwards
Dec. 3	Woodchurch	2 pm	Pier Head	1/-	B. Edwards
„ 10	Scarth Hill (Benediction)	11 am	Exchange Stn.	1/4	M. Roberts
„ 17	Yuletide Walk and Treasure Hunt	2 pm	Pier Head	1/-	Rambling Committee
Jan. 7	Caldy Hill (Benediction)	2-15 pm	Pier Head	1/-	J. Stewart
„ 14	Eaton Hall	10-20 am	Pier Head	2/6	M. Bundy
„ 21	Rhydymwyn	10 am	Pier Head	4/-	B. Tracy
27/28	Carrog Weekend	Full details later			Ramb. Comm.
Feb. 4	Weaver Valley	9-15 am	Lime St. Stn.	2/9	M. Walsh
„ 11	Winter Hill	10-15 am	Russell St.	3/5	B. Edwards
„ 18	Barnston Dale	2-15 pm	Pier Head	1/-	S. Macaulay
„ 25	Derbyshire Ramble	Full details later			
Mar. 4	Windle Hill (Benediction)	10-20 am	Pier Head	1/	F. Kane
„ 11	Llanfyndd	10 am	James St. Stn.	3/3	B. Tracey
„ 18	Noctorum	2-15 pm	Pier Head	1/-	P. Toes
23/26	Easter Chalet Weekend	Full details later			Ramb. Comm.
Apr. 1	Mystery Tour (Benediction)	10-45 am	Pier Head	1/3	Ramb. Comm.
„ 8	Delamere	9-15 am	Lime St. Stn.	2/9	F. Boyle
„ 15	Saighton	10-20 am	Pier Head	2/6	L. Constantine
„ 22	Irby Mill Hill	2-15 pm	Pier Head	1/-	F. Begley
„ 29	Rostherne Mere	10-30 am	Pier Head	3/-	J. Duncan